

Soviet Trade Excerpts

Value and Direction

Soviet foreign trade turnover (exports plus imports) is estimated to have reached \$8,250 million in 1957, a 13 percent increase over 1956 and 2.5 times the 1950 volume.

Trade with the Bloc between 1950 and 1956 accounted for 76 to 82 percent of total Soviet trade, but in 1957 the Bloc's share appears to have been reduced to 71 percent. China, the Soviet Zone of Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland are the USSR's leading trading partners and normally account for about 75 percent of Soviet trade with the Bloc (about 55 percent of total Soviet trade). Between 1950 and 1957 China was the USSR's leading trading partner, accounting for about 25 percent of the Soviet Union's trade with the Bloc and about 20 percent of its total trade; in 1957 the Soviet Zone of Germany appears to have taken over China's position.

The USSR's trade with the Free World has been expanding at a rapid rate, particularly since 1953. Soviet trade with the Free World has increased by 300 percent since 1950 as against an increase of 120 percent in its trade with the Bloc and 150 percent increase in its total trade turnover. Approximately 75 percent of Soviet trade with the Free World is with industrial countries, principally in Western Europe. Although Soviet trade with the underdeveloped areas has increased rapidly over the past several years these areas continue

to take up roughly the same share of Soviet-Free World trade (28 percent in 1957, 26 percent in 1956, and 25 percent in 1955).

Commodity Composition

Raw materials (including fuels) have long dominated Soviet exports, and in 1956 they comprised 66 percent of total exports, (\$2.5 billion\*). Of these, ferrous and nonferrous metals generally occupy the largest share while raw cotton also bulks large in Soviet raw materials exports. Petroleum and petroleum products exports, although accounting only for 7.1 percent, (\$260 million) nevertheless have been increasing their share steadily since 1950.

Machinery and equipment (including motor vehicles and ships) have become significant export items in the postwar years, and their share in Soviet exports has usually occupied about 20 percent.

Grain, a large export item in the prewar period, has been declining in importance in the postwar years. In 1956 it accounted for 7 percent of total exports (\$260 million) as against 18.5 percent (\$332 million) in 1950. The share of consumer goods has also decreased -- 7.3 percent in 1956 as against 14 percent in 1950 -- although in absolute terms the level has remained the same.

The bulk of Soviet exports to the European Satellites consists of raw materials and foodstuffs, while a large part of Soviet exports to Communist China is made up of industrial equipment and complete plants.

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\* All absolute amounts are estimated.

Raw materials also make up a large part of Soviet imports, accounting for about 55 percent of Soviet imports (\$2 billion) in 1956. The USSR is normally a net exporter in this category. The raw material imports are generally not dominated by any particular item, although ferrous and nonferrous metals and textile raw materials (other than cotton) are relatively important.

Machinery and equipment (including motor vehicles and ships) generally account for 25 to 35 percent of Soviet imports and the Soviet Union is a net importer in this category both with the Bloc and with the world as a whole.

Consumer goods usually account for 15 to 20 percent of total Soviet imports and were valued at approximately \$500 million in 1956.

Approximately half of Soviet imports from the Bloc are raw materials including fuels; consumer goods account for about one-fifth and machinery and equipment generally account for one-fourth to one-third. China's exports to the USSR are principally agricultural products, foodstuffs, and nonferrous metals.

Table 1

Estimated Foreign Trade Turnover of the USSR  
for Selected Years

millions of current \$US

	1950		1954		1955		1956		1957*	
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent
Total**	3,250	100	6,250	100	6,529	100	7,202	100	8,250	100
Sino-Soviet Bloc	2,636	81	4,900	78	5,153	79	5,404	76	5,820	71
Free World**	614	19	1,350	22	1,376	21	1,878	24	2,430	29

\* Preliminary estimates.

\*\*Does not include gold sales. These have been estimated as follows (in millions of current \$ US):

1953	150
1954	93
1955	70
1956	150
1957	<u>263</u>
Total	726

Table 2

Soviet Trade with the Bloc  
for Selected Years

millions of current \$ US

	1950		1955		1956		1957*	
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent
Total	2636.0	100.0	5153.0	100.0	5404.0	100.0	5820.0	100.0
Albania	15.5	.6	20.8	.4	26.3	.5	<u>n a</u>	-
Bulgaria	166.8	6.3	248.8	4.8	253.0	4.7	<u>n a</u>	-
Hungary	210.3	8.0	261.8	5.1	247.8	4.6	346.0	5.9
Soviet Zone	345.8	13.1	985.0	19.2	1197.8	22.2	1525.0	26.2
Poland	451.5	17.1	718.5	14.0	640.5	11.8	673.1	11.6
Romania	253.3	9.6	477.5	9.3	447.3	8.3	<u>n a</u>	-
Czechoslovakia	422.0	16.0	742.5	14.4	770.3	14.3	932.2	16.0
China	576.5	21.9	1391.8	27.1	1497.3	27.7	1290.0	22.2
Outer Mongolia	82.5	3.1	175.5	3.4	157.8	2.9	<u>n a</u>	-
North Korea	112.5	4.3	126.8	2.5	159.3	2.9	<u>n a</u>	-
North Vietnam	-	-	.4	-	3.7	.1	<u>n a</u>	-

\* Preliminary estimates.

Table 3

Soviet Trade with Underdeveloped Areas\*  
for Selected Years

	million of current \$ US			
	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957**</u>
Europe	23.4	55.8	142.7	133.6
Middle East and Africa	84.7	99.5	107.5	310.5
South and South East Asia	13.0	27.6	84.5	124.0
Latin America	<u>94.0</u>	<u>115.2</u>	<u>66.7</u>	<u>110.0</u>
Total	215.1	298.1	401.4	678.1

\* The underdeveloped countries included are: Iceland, Portugal, Spain, and Yugoslavia in Europe; Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey in the Middle East and Africa; Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaya, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam in South and Southeast Asia; and Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela in Latin America.

\*\* Preliminary estimates.

Table 4

USSR Trade Turnover with Selected Free World Countries  
for Selected Years

	millions of current \$ US				
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>
United Kingdom	135.6	158.2	264.8	310.9	342.8
Finland	88.5	229.8	224.9	258.1	319.0*
West Germany	.2	34.8	62.6	121.4	156.7
France	7.5	70.7	85.3	104.7	110.9
Yugoslavia	-	2.5	32.4	112.7	109.5*

\* Preliminary estimates.